

S E C R E T

April 14, 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRIME MINISTER

Your Meeting with Mrs. Jean Wadds  
at 3:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 16

You agreed with our suggestion to see Mrs. Wadds during her Easter vacation in Canada. The purpose of this memorandum is to brief you about the current state of the High Commission's constitutional activities at Westminster and to propose some talking points for your meeting Thursday, April 16, with her.

The High Commission in London is entering a critical phase in its role to secure British parliamentary approval for the constitutional package. While a favourable Supreme Court decision will undoubtedly gain easier acceptance for our joint resolution, a number of MPs and Lords will likely wish to speak on the resolution when it is debated at Westminster. There is also concern about time allocation for the motion, given the British government's decision to adjourn July 24th for the Royal wedding. Thus, it is important that Mrs. Wadds, who has done an excellent job to date, not assume that the battle in London will be automatically won once the Supreme Court has ruled. We know from recent visits by Mr. Chrétien, myself, and Fred Gibson last week, that no matter what the court says, the battle in London is still very important.

In addition to Mrs. Wadds' contacts with the British government, the High Commissioner and her constitutional task force have been conducting an ongoing contact program with influential members on both sides of the British Parliament and with leading political party, public associations and study groups. The provinces, for their part, have been waging an effective campaign using both traditional contacts and public fora to present misinformation and to seek to raise doubts about the legality and public support for the constitutional package in Canada.

... 2

- 2 -

S E C R E T

Mrs. Wadds has held dozens of briefing sessions, including lunches or dinners since October, 1980 with senior British Parliamentarians. The High Commission is currently identifying speaking engagements and briefing opportunities which will serve as a pretext for us to invite and pay for a broad spectrum of Canadians from both the public and private sectors to reach different groups of British Parliamentarians. In addition, a systematic campaign to reach all favourable or undecided MPs through personal contact with written background material is underway, supplemented by a similar media relations program. The campaign is intended to intensify through the month of May leading up to the Supreme Court decision. Mrs. Wadds has several longstanding commitments outside London during this period in support of Canada-U.K. relations.

In your meeting with Mrs. Wadds, you may wish to discuss the following points:

- (i) Your appreciation of her efforts to promote understanding of the constitutional package and her effective lobbying efforts to date (apparently, Mrs. Wadds has received some critical letters from Conservative Party supporters in Canada about her activities).
- (ii) The importance you attach to redoubling our efforts to contact and cultivate support among U.K. Parliamentarians in May in the period leading up to the Supreme Court decision should be underscored.
- (iii) While you appreciate that Mrs. Wadds has longstanding invitations tied to other High Commissions business, her presence and active lobbying efforts are needed in London during May and June. She should be absent as little as possible during that period for there is no one in London who can substitute for her. (Mrs. Wadds is inclined to underestimate her own value and importance in this exercise.)


... 3

- 3 -

S E C R E T

- (iv) Although we shall provide additional resources to supplement the constitutional task force during May and June (e.g., we will be posting some additional officer and support staff to London for this period), there will be inevitable demands on the High Commission for support which may prove inconvenient to offer but to which you attach the highest priority and you hope Mrs. Wadds will give these demands the same priority.
- (v) Thank her for all her help to date and wish her good luck in the months ahead. Most importantly, stress the urgency and importance you attach to having the resolution dealt with quickly in London.

s.19(1)

  
Michael J.L. Kirby  
